

**IMPACT OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ENHANCING
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCIES AT THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL****Dr. Mukhtiar Ahmed Arain**

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Education, Sukkur, IBA University, Sindh, Pakistan**Abstract.**

The Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of teachers strengthens pedagogical skills and improves student outcomes in teacher education. The aim of the research was to evaluate CPD services and pedagogical skills of teachers and to evaluate learning outcomes of students at the elementary school level. The study adopted a quantitative survey design based on a positivist research paradigm. Six-two English language teachers at the elementary school level were surveyed. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS-27. The results of the reliability test indicated that the data had a high degree of reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = .751). Because data was not normally distributed, the researcher used Spearman's correlation to analyze the data. The results showed that lesson planning, teaching and learning methodologies, classroom management, the use of technology in teaching, and CPD services positively impacted the professional confidence of teachers. Teachers stated that CPD services positively impacted the academic performance and the engagement of the students. In addition, positive relationships were reported between CPD and professional competence of teachers ($r = .510, p < .01$), CPD and student learning outcomes ($r = .553, p < .01$) and professional competence of teachers and student learning outcomes ($r = .405, p < .01$). This research recommends that CPD services be sustained and adapted to specific contexts.

Keywords: *Continuous Professional Development (CPD), Pedagogical Competencies, Teacher Professional Competence, Student Learning Outcomes, English Language Teaching (ELT), Professional Learning and Development*

Introduction:

At this historical moment, being competent is crucial in today's dynamic landscape for schoolteachers. Continuous professional development is one of the ten National Professional Standards for Teachers in the Pakistani context. CPD serves as a necessary mechanism to enhance teachers' required skills, equipping them with instructional practices, thereby enhancing their classroom practices (Ravandpor, A., 2019). It is particularly crucial in English Language Teaching (ELT), where teachers are pushed to apply innovative strategies such as communicative language teaching (CLT), activity-based learning, and the approaches integrated with technology to create an impactful learning environment for language acquisition (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Still, oral proficiency remains a significant hurdle for second language teachers who demonstrate greater competencies in reading, writing, and listening (Richard, 2008). Various efforts are applied through CPD to cater to such challenges, but still require English language teaching competencies to improve students' academic performance. It creates interest to explore the effective pedagogical methods, techniques, strategies, and dynamic approaches that fulfill the need and elucidate for the educators how teaching and learning of ESL could be more impactful at the elementary level (Arif et al., 2020). Huge and predictable changes with the advent of Education 4.0 are accruing within the educational settings has ushering in a new era (Buddhima & Keerthiwansha, 2018). It signifies driving education in non-traditional practices as a response to technology (Arif et al., 2020). The fastest growing technology and communication has produced a massive change not only in globalization but also in the educational system. Globally, success stories from Finland,

Singapore, and Japan also show robust systematic improvements for student outcomes (Schleicher, 2016). However, in Pakistan, by chance, newly joined English teachers face challenges relying on outdated teaching procedures (Ahmed & Malik, 2023). Indeed, short-term CPD workshop initiatives exist with a lack of follow-up mechanisms and contextual tailoring (Khan et al., 2022). Usually, teachers are facilitated with the platforms for peer collaboration and insightful sessions from their experiences (Khan et al., 2022). Overall, any mismatch between the professional development and what is taught in class severely limits the usefulness of these trainings.

Problem Statement:

Despite numerous CPD training initiatives were taken by relevant departments, the real-world impact on improving English language teachers pedagogical competencies remains questionable because of the lack of stability, suitability, local context, and sustained influence. Yet several teachers in classrooms are using absolute teaching strategies (Khan et al., 2022; Ahmed & Malik, 2023). Alternatively, in Pakistan, many factors limited the success of CPD, such as inadequate institutional backing, no professional learning communities, and not enough training resources (Schleicher, 2016). Therefore, the current study seeks to examine how CPD can be effectively leveraged to improve teachers' pedagogical competencies to improve overall language teaching outcomes at the school level.

Research Objectives:

1. To examine dominant factors of continuous professional development on English Language Teachers' pedagogical competencies at the elementary school level.
2. To analyze the influence of English language teachers' pedagogical competencies on students' academic performance at the Elementary school level.
3. To analyze the correlation between English language teachers' professional development and students' learning outcomes at the Elementary school Level.

Research Question:

1. What are the dominant factors of Continuous Professional Development impact on English language teachers' pedagogical competencies at the elementary school level?
2. To analyze, in what ways do English language teachers' pedagogical competencies impact students' academic performance at the Elementary level?
3. Is there a correlation between English language teachers' professional development and students' learning outcomes at the Elementary school Level?

Hypothesis:

Null hypothesis

- There is no relation between English language teachers' professional development and students' learning outcomes at the Elementary school Level.

Alternative Hypothesis

- There is a significant relationship between English language teachers' professional development and students' learning outcomes at the Elementary school Level.

Literature Review

Role of Pedagogical Competencies of English Language Teachers

Continuous professional development is an ongoing learning process that enables teachers to develop various skills, including professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness, beyond initial teacher training (Murray, 2010). The 21st-century student competencies require sophisticated forms of teaching that align with current needs and present challenging content to enhance critical thinking, complex problem-solving skills, effective communication, collaboration, and self-direction (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). CPD helps evolve pedagogical approaches in diverse learning environments. Teachers need opportunities to learn and adjust their teaching methods to meet the changing needs and demands of learning. (Kim

& Choi, 2024; Nasim, 2024). Nevertheless, since most institutions do not offer enough facilities or support, workshops and seminars are used more often (Ahmad & Sahar, 2024). It stresses that lack of time, money, and support from the school often makes teaching challenging for teachers. Haryanto et al. (2024) teachers face various challenges due to a hectic school schedule and multiple workloads, which cause stress and problems for working teachers. Abdusyakur (2022) teachers reflect on the learning materials and teaching strategies and engage in sharing expertise and mutual feedback. Cahyono (2015) highlights the use of technology in learning vocabulary through games, which helps teachers improve their pedagogical content knowledge and instructional quality through shared reflection on the relationship between teaching actions and student learning outcomes. Subsequently, mentoring and coaching are significant professional development activities that enable teachers to learn from experienced mentors (Murray, 2010; Nguyen, 2015; Syahrial et al., 2023). Additionally, teacher agency and self-directed learning are being recognized more and more, and this kind of self-driven involvement, along with organized continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities, seems essential for meaningful and lasting professional growth. Such well-managed programs help teachers build initial pedagogical competencies. Abdusyakur (2022) demonstrates in the Korean context that there is a significant improvement in teachers' confidence and competencies in using English as a medium of instruction, as well as effective classroom management and teaching pedagogies, with the aid of self-efficacy. It is also highlighted that teacher self-efficacy (TSE) develops through continuing professional development (CPD), which boosts the confidence level required to fulfill instructional duties. Furthermore, sharing and adoption of new teaching methods among English language teachers, leading to improved instructional practices, were experienced (Haryanto et al., 2024). Another experience from Indonesia's Kampus Mengajar, though focused on pre-service teachers, highlights the development of skills highly relevant for in-service teachers (Syahrial et al., 2023). The English teachers followed sequences of individual exploration, combined with practical experiences and mutual support among teachers, as well as reflective practice, to enhance their pedagogical competencies (Kim & Choi, 2024). Comparatively, a Chinese study has shown that digital skills are an effective way to enhance teaching competencies in English education. Similarly, access to quality professional development (PD) opportunities significantly impacts pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) levels, with urban teachers often demonstrating higher competency due to greater access (Nasim, 2024). Despite various benefits, there are greater numbers of challenges faced by teachers in the process of implementing these strategies at the school level due to lack of time, facilities, and institutional support at school levels, especially in developing countries and rural areas of developing countries, in getting continuous professional development opportunities (Ahmad & Sahar, 2024; Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2020), and it causes disparities between the competencies of urban and rural teachers.

English Language Teachers' Pedagogical Competencies: Students' Learning Outcomes

A pedagogically competent teacher can manage both teaching and learning, encompassing knowledge, instructional methods, technological integration, planning, management, and evaluation, as well as students' growth (Lestari et al., 2024). Such pedagogical competencies also help to identify and solve problems, raising students' success in school (Arianto et al., 2024). In addition, Sudargini and Purwanto (2020) emphasize that teachers with strong pedagogical skills can pick the best strategies to affect student outcomes. Channa and Sahito (2022) highlighted that pedagogically skilled teachers positively impact students' learning performance. Indeed, the English language skills of teachers are essential for good school quality, while being aware of students' backgrounds allows teachers to organise practical lessons. Moreover, teachers can support students' development by combining dialogue instruction, access to technology, communication, and assessment methods (Tahang H., Wael

A., & Hartanti R., 2022). However, teachers of English demonstrate their expertise around the world impacts a wide selection of student learning, including their language skills, learning to read, general participation at school, and some emotional factors.

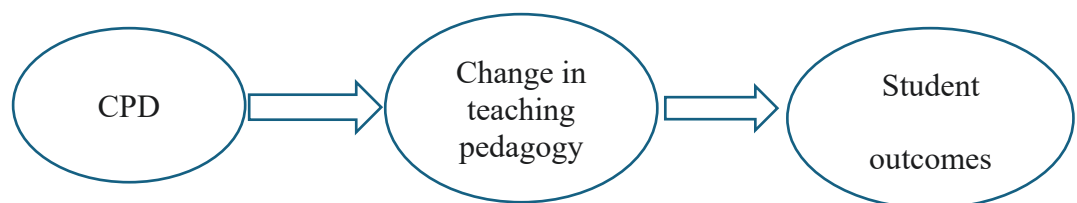
Language teaching methods employed by Hoang and Burns (2023) highlighted the significance of communication approaches, such as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the role of peer support in enhancing student learning. So, Effective implementation requires teacher competency to create a supportive learning environment that positively impacts students' learning outcomes and progress. However, Hakuta et al. (2013) emphasised the scaffolding methods of language because, in this method, teachers break down complex tasks into shorter ones, allowing students to interact more efficiently in meaningful, content-rich projects that incorporate creativity and analysis. In addition, teachers develop sophisticated teaching strategies by knowing the impact of reading on the production of writing at different levels (Clarke & Taylor, 2020). Ultimately, the pedagogical strategies, such as Draw, Talk, Write, and Share, are powerful tools for fostering early literacy skills by integrating multiple modes of expression (Mackenzie, 2022).

Moreover, Teachers' assessments, especially those using formative assessment for and as learning, significantly impact English language learners. Heritage (2014) emphasised the importance of formative assessment in designing tasks that focus on content and language. It also provides in fact, timely feedback sharing enable students to learn more effectively. Dietz (2020) demonstrate that effective assessment techniques enhance students' learning outcomes. Certainly, teachers who use self-assessment techniques to specify criteria for their work and judge their progress help students become empowered and self-regulated learners, developing metacognitive abilities, and gain an understanding of how to learn a language effectively (Tang et al., 2024).

Likewise, the classroom environment, which also represents student diversity through individualised environments for social interactions, multicultural integration, and English language support with additional language and dialect needs (Nguyen & Rushton, 2023). However, the level of proficiency corresponds to teachers' information regarding learners' backgrounds, where appropriate instructional materials can be utilised (Dutton & Rushton, 2023).

Continuous Professional Development of English Teachers: A Pathway for Quality Education

The fundamental purpose of driving investment in English Language teachers' continuous professional development is to enhance student learning outcomes, which requires evaluating teacher changes and contextual elements, as well as intervention-delivery delays. However, teachers' participation in continuing professional learning ensures advancements in their pupils' educational paths (Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2020).



Theoretical Pathway: CPD -> Teacher Change -> Student Outcomes

CPD sessions strengthen teachers' teaching skills, equip them with new knowledge and their teaching pedagogies (Babinski et al., 2018). However, teachers' training enables them to teach

effectively and ultimately helps students achieve better learning outcomes (Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2020). It indicates that teachers' interest leads to improved teaching skills (Doğan & Adams, 2018). At the same time, teachers' academic language support skills significantly impact improving teachers' classroom practices as well (Kalinowski et al., 2020). As far as, willingness to adapt new practices significantly shapes students' learning (Ahmad & Sahar, 2024; Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2020). In the same way, CPD initiatives often encounter obstacles in reaching their objectives because urban areas typically have access to better resources than rural areas (Nasim, 2024).

Research design

A quantitative design followed the approach of a positivist philosophical stance, and information was used to support the hypothesis that reality can be measured physically (Ambon et al., 2024). The goal of this study is to find out how Continuous Professional Development (CPD) supports language teachers in teaching at the elementary school level and helps their students to improve in learning (James, 2016). To make sure the sample was not biased, a survey design tool randomly sampled 50 teachers from several rural schools in Sindh (Niala et al., 2016). In the collected data, teachers rated their responses with a five-point Likert scale. The statistical software SPSS-27 was then used to analyze and interpret the results.

Results

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

This table shows the Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.751 for a total of 15 items used in the study.

The research standards show Cronbach Alpha value above 0.7 that indicates internal consistency and reliability of the scale, it means questionnaire items used in study.

Fig:1

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.751	15

Table 2: Test of Normality

It shows two normality test Kolmogorov- Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk. All values (Sig.) in both tests are 0.000 or below 0.05, which highlights that data is not normally distributed. It means p-value are below 0.05, the null hypothesis of normal distribution is rejected. Therefore, non-parametric statistical tests like Spearman are more appropriate for analyzing correlations in this research study.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics related to how Continuous Professional Development (CPD) influence Teachers' Professional Competence (TPC). The data was gathered from 62 participants. The highest mean score was recorded for the statement (CPD has improved my lesson planning and instructional Strategies (M = 4.10). This finding indicates that the most respondents felt strongly agree that CD helped enhance their planning and instructional capabilities, a core area of the teacher professionalism.

The next highest item was (I find any noticeable difference in my teaching after CPD session) (M = 4.05). This shows that teachers have experienced visible improvement in their teaching practices, which validates effectiveness of the CPD programs. Another key area positively impacted was (I feel more confident managing a diverse classroom after CPD training) (M = 3.90) indicating that the CPD also contributed to the greater confidence and adaptability in dealing with the student diversity, a vital component of the modern teaching.

The lowest mean was found for the item (I really apply what I learned in CPD session in my classroom) (M = 2.85). This low mean indicates that the most teachers disagree with this

statement showing that they actively apply knowledge and skills gained through CPD in their real classroom settings.

In summary, The Table 2 reveal CPD has had a strong positive influence on the major areas of teaching competence, specially lesson planning overall teaching quality, and the classroom management.

The highest average score suggests that CPD sessions are not only beneficial but also practically implemented by the teachers in their day to day work, to meet needs of the intended goal and professional development.

Fig: 2

Tests of Normality	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
CPD influence on TPC	.176	62	.000	.886	62	.000
English TPC influence on SLOs	.249	62	.000	.829	62	.000
Correlation between ELTPD and SLO	.174	62	.000	.931	62	.002

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics, Objective 1 CPD's Influence on Teacher Professional Competence (TPC), items with highest score mean values are (M = 4.10) 'CPD has improved my lesson planning and instructional strategies' and mean value (M = 4.05) I find noticeable difference in my teaching after CPD session (M = 4.05).

The highest mean value (M=4.10) highlights that teacher strongly agreed regarding lesson planning and teaching strategies developed through CPD.

The lowest mean value (M = 2.85) was about (I rarely apply what I learned in CPD sessions) that is not accepted,

Fig: 3

Descriptive Statistics	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. CPD has improved my lesson planning and instructional strategies.	62	4.10	.503
2. I feel more confident managing a diverse classroom after CPD training.	62	3.90	.882
3. I find any noticeable difference in my teaching after CPD sessions.	62	4.05	.734
4. CPD has helped me integrate technology effectively into my lessons.	62	3.81	.955
5. I rarely apply what I learned in CPD sessions in my classroom.	62	2.85	1.114
Valid N (listwise)	62		

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics, Objective 2, English Teachers Professional Competency influence on Students Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Items with highest mean values: "My students show improved performance after I apply CPD strategies" (M = 3.94)

"CPD has enhanced my ability to address the learning needs of all students" (M = 3.90)

The evidence indicates that, teachers believed CPD had a beneficial effect on the academic achievements of students in addition to their ability to use unique approaches to the needs of different students.

The least scoring item (M = 2.42) was the one which indicates that there is not seen a change

in the engagement of students, and it indicated that the teachers disagreed, which implies that CPD is considered having enhanced the engagement of students as well.

Fig 4

Descriptive Statistics	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
6. The training content is not fully applicable in my classroom due to a lack of necessary teaching tools and resources.	62	3.47	.918
7. CPD has enhanced my ability to address the learning needs of all students.	62	3.79	.771
8. CPD has enhanced my ability to address the learning needs of all students.	62	3.90	.670
9. There is no visible improvement in student engagement after CPD.	62	2.42	.967
10. My students show improved performance after I apply CPD strategies.	62	3.94	.624
Valid N (listwise)	62		

Table 5: Correlation Analysis- Relation between CPD, TPC and SLOs.

It highlights the Spearman correlation coefficients to examine the relationship among three variables.

It supports study's 3rd objective by statistically analysing interconnectedness of the teacher development and students learning.

The result indicate that all the relationships are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), as shown by the p- value (Sig.) being less than 0.05, confirming rejection of the null hypothesis acceptance of the alternative hypothesis.

Key Correlational Findings

CPD → TPC

The correlation coefficient is 0.510 with $p = 0.000$, indicating a moderate positive correlation. This means that as teacher participate in CPP programs, their professional competence increases, including planning, confidence, classroom management and pedagogical strategies.

CPD → SLOs (via ELTPD):

A slightly stronger positive correlation is observed between CPD and SLOs through ELTPD, with the coefficient of 0.553 and $p =$ value 0.000.

This suggests that the CPD not only enhance the teacher competencies but also directly contributes to the improved Students Learning outcomes, especially when CPD focuses on English language teaching.

TPC → SLOs:

The correlation between English (TPC) and (SLOs) is 0.40 with $p =$ value 0.001 , showing a moderate but weaker positive relation.

Conclusion

The correlation result confirmed with CPD has a meaningful impact on the teacher growth and student success. The statistically significant values show that investment in teacher development programs, specially dose targeting English instructions leads to improvements in classroom practices and ultimately enhances the students learning.

Fig 5

Variables		CPD influence on TPC	English TPC influence on SLOs	ELTPD and SLO
CPD influence on TPC	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.510**	.553**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
	N	62	62	62
English TPC influence on SLOs	Correlation Coefficient	.510**	1.000	.405**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.001
	N	62	62	62
ELTPD and SLO	Correlation Coefficient	.553**	.405**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.
	N	62	62	62

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Conclusion

Previous studies demonstrate diverse and effective continuous professional development that enhances the pedagogical competencies of elementary English language teachers globally. These various models of constant professional Development, such as PLCS, LACS, and Lesson Study, complement traditional workshops by providing sustained, practice-based support and have impacted the competencies of large elementary school English teachers, including instructional strategies, technology integration, teacher self-efficacy, and pedagogical content knowledge. However, the lack of access to resources, support, and contextually relevant challenges show a gap between rural and urban teachers. There is a need for continuous professional Development based on the high-quality, sustained, context-sensitive, and equitable Development of the sophisticated pedagogical expertise elementary English teachers require to foster foundational language skills in the 21st century.

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